

HIGHLAND COVID-19 COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Additional Support

As well as providing emergency financial support via our own hardship fund, we also aim to advise of additional support that may be of benefit to you within your local communities. We have listed these on our website and our customer services team will be happy to assist in helping you further if required. (a list/link to be added).

The Highland Council have a dedicated free helpline on 0300 3031362 which covers a wide range of service, advice and support advice. They have also set up Humanitarian Assistance Centres, details of these have been included within this letter and can also be found on our website.

We are working closely with our communities and supporting The Highland Council to offer properties to people in need.

Where to get help :-

COVID-19 Highland Helpline

The Highland Council has also launched a free helpline on **0300 303 1362** to give assistance during COVID-19. You can get advice on benefits and personal support, education and social care and there will also be advice for businesses who may need help with financial support. The free helpline is open **Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm.**

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE CENTRES (HAC) or Local Hub's

Highland Council has now confirmed the 10 local Humanitarian Assistance Centres (HACs) they are setting up.

This is in addition to the virtual HAC which is already in operation gathering requests for help and offers of help. Over 200 community groups throughout the Highland Council area are already registered. The local HACs to be co-located with key worker learning/care hubs are:

- Lochaber High school;
- Portree High School;
- Dingwall Academy;
- Golspie High school;
- Wick - East Caithness Community Campus
- Ullapool High School.

The other locations are:

- Invergordon Academy;
- Nairn Academy;
- Aviemore Community Centre (attached to Primary School)
- Inverness Leisure Centre

There will be a team of 6 managers at each location (with scope for 2 teams of 3 to work on a rota basis). Other support staff have been identified from Highlife Highland (HLH). Currently Highland Council envisage a small staff group being located at the HACs. They will connect requests for help from individuals with the offers of support from local community groups as well as Highland Council staff and HLH staff if needed. Data relating to requests and offers will be fed to each local HAC by the virtual HAC

Anybody needing assistance should contact the council on 0300 303 1362, and they will refer them to the HAC closest to their home. This should include food, nappies etc. I will forward more information on this asap.

Practical support in the community

Groups of volunteers have set up support groups across Highland. These groups are working under the guidance of the Highland Council and the Highland Third Sector Interface and have received advice on keeping both you and them safe and well. These groups are working to help those in their communities who need help whether by getting shopping for them, collecting medications / prescriptions, walking dogs or just providing a friendly chat on the phone. **For help and advice call the free helpline on 0300 303 1362.** For information on what help is available in your area see <https://www.highlandtsi.org.uk/covid>

Shielding

The Highland Council is responding to the Scottish Government's communication last week on "shielding" people 'at risk' from coronavirus. People with specific health conditions which put them at higher risk of harm from the virus will receive letters from the NHS advising them they must self-isolate for 12 weeks to protect themselves and reduce the risk of hospital admissions.

Anyone receiving a "shielding letter" can contact the Council for support during their period of self-isolation. People in this position may need different types of support and that might change during the 12 weeks. Some people may need no assistance at all because they have family or friends who can help.

Those seeking help are being asked to use the Council's dedicated helpline at **(01349) 886669** or complete a form online at www.highland.gov.uk/shielding to provide their contact details and the type of support they require.

Staying connected while social distancing

It is very important that people who are self-isolating and social distancing do not become isolated completely. Age Scotland have increased funding to their Helpline service to support the over 50's – if you are feeling lonely or just need someone to talk to give them a call!

Support groups have also been set up in many communities across Highland – they have volunteers who are always ready to chat on the phone. You may already have had a card or leaflet through your door with a local contact. A register of these groups has also been set up by Highland Third Sector Interface and can be accessed online here <http://www.covidhelp4highland.org/>

If you do not have access to the internet please call HTSI on 01349 808022 and they will put you in touch with local volunteers.

KINSHIP CARE

Kinship Care Advice Service for Scotland (KCASS) 0808 800 0006 – will mainly focus on financial and legal information and advice

Kinship Care Alliance - 07490720123 - will mainly focus on local group signposting, practical and emotional support

Big Hearts – 0131 603 4927 – will mainly focus on reducing loneliness, parenting support & strategies, peer social support and referrals to local services

Nurture Scotland – 07547525674 or 07505855341– will mainly focus on supporting educational strategies and removing stress about school work for carers who have children at home

Red Cross in Inverness

Have pre-packed boxes of staple foodstuffs for anyone in need.

Open Monday- Friday

Can be accessed on 01463 796624

They will ask for a name and number and will deliver.

They are also able to offer support in other issues if that is appropriate

| WHAT | WHERE | WHO | HOW |
|--|-----------------------------|--|---|
| FINANCIAL FUNDING GRANT SUPPORT | INVERGORDON | INVERGORDON COMMUNITY TRUST | https://www.facebook.com/ThePlaceYouthClub/ |
| PRACTICAL SUPPORT | ALNESS | THE PLACE YOUTH CLUB | https://www.facebook.com/ThePlaceYouthClub/ |
| VARIOUS | SUTHERLAND | VARIETY OF CHARITIES | https://www.facebook.com/Brora-Community-Antivirus-100189271630549/ |
| FOOD | ALNESS & INVERGORDON | FOODBANK | REFRERRALS |
| VARIOUS | INVERNESS/INVERGORDON/NAIRN | HELPING HANDS IN THE HIGHLANDS | https://www.facebook.com/groups/ahelpinghandinthehighlands/ |
| VARIOUS | ACROSS CAITHNESS | VARIETY OF CHARITIBALE ORGS | https://www.facebook.com/groups/ahelpinghandinthehighlands/ |
| VARIOUS | BADENOCH & STRATHSPEY | VARIETY OF CHARITIBALE ORGS | https://www.facebook.com/groups/ahelpinghandinthehighlands/ |
| VARIOUS | SYKE & LOCHALSH | VARIETY OF CHARITIBALE ORGS | https://en-gb.facebook.com/BroadfordEnvironment/ |
| VARIOUS | LOCHABER | VARIETY OF CHARITIBALE ORGS | http://www.facebook.com/groups/GlencoeCommunityNoticeboard |
| VARIOUS | MID-ROSS | VARIETY OF CHARITIBALE ORGS | https://www.facebook.com/groups/878337082618675/ |
| VARIOUS | WESTER- ROSS | VARIETY OF CHARITIBALE ORGS | https://www.facebook.com/ApplecrossCovid19/ |
| VARIOUS | EASTER-ROSS | VARIETY OF CHARITIBALE ORGS | https://www.facebook.com/groups/640876429816118/ |
| VARIOUS | INVERNESS & SHIRE | VARIETY OF CHARITIBALE ORGS | https://www.facebook.com/groups/1104146199936352/ |
| VARIOUS | NAIRN | VARIETY OF CHARITIBALE ORGS/VOLUNTEERS | https://www.facebook.com/NairnsGreenHive/ |
| UNDERTSANDING & APPLYING FOR UC | N/A | DWP | https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/employment-and-benefits-support/faqs/ |
| COUNCIL TAX KEY CHANGES TO SERVICES-helpline | ACROSS THE HIGHLANDS | THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL | https://www.highland.gov.uk/coronavirus COVID-19 Free Helpline 0300 303 1362 |